



**2017/2136(DEC)**

20.2.2018

# **OPINION**

of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2016, Section III – Commission and executive agencies  
(2017/2136(DEC))

Rapporteur: Isabella De Monte

PA\_NonLeg

## SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Transport and Tourism calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes the finding of the Court of Auditors (the “Court”) that the consolidated accounts of the Union for the year 2016 are reliable and that the transactions underlying the accounts of the Commission for the 2016 financial year are generally legal and regular in all material aspects, except for cost reimbursement payments which are affected by errors; regrets that the overall estimated level of error of 3,1% is above the Court’s materiality threshold (2%); expects the Court to provide a detailed report of the errors to the Parliament;
2. Welcomes the fact that for the first time since 1994, the Court issued a qualified opinion on payments made from the Union budget, which reflects an important improvement in the Union finances;
3. Regrets that, at a time when the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) is under preparation, the Court did not provide any comprehensive information regarding the audits performed for transport sector under the area of “Competitiveness for growth and employment”, in particular regarding the CEF;
4. Takes note of the Court’s observation as concerns the risk of backlog of unpaid claims in the final years of the current MFF and in the early years of the next MFF; invites the Commission to present to the Parliament and the Council an assessment of the implications with sector-specific recommendations;
5. Notes that in 2016:
  - EUR 4 346 million in commitment appropriations and EUR 2 321 million in payment appropriations was available for transport policies, including CEF, transport security and passengers rights transport agencies and research and innovation related to transport (Horizon 2020),
  - EUR 3 854,9 million in commitment appropriations and EUR 1 794,6 million was available to the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA) for CEF transport (Chapter 06 02 01) and Horizon 2020 (transport - Article 06 03 03);
  - EUR 71,3 million in commitment and payment appropriations was available for administrative expenditure;
6. Notes that by the end of 2016, CEF had provided support to 452 transport projects for a total of EUR 19,4 billion in investments across Europe; reiterates the importance of the CEF funding instrument for the completion of the TEN-T network and for achieving a Single European Transport Area; stresses that the budgetary cuts to the CEF made in the past, due to the funding of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) initiative, should be avoided in the future;

7. Regrets the fairly limited progress made in the completion of the TEN-T strategic networks planned under the European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund; asks the Commission to investigate how problems related to implementation rates and imbalance between Member States could be improved; invites the European TEN-T Coordinators to conduct a thorough assessment of the projects completed and the improvements achieved along the TEN-T corridors under the current programming period, and to present it to the Commission and the Parliament; furthermore asks the Commission to propose a mechanism, including technical assistance, to increase the added value of European Funds in completion of the TEN-T corridors and maximise progress;
8. Notes that in 2016 EFSI provided EUR 3,64 billion financing 29 operations: 25 transport projects and 4 multi-sectors funds with an expected 12,65 billion of total investments; regrets that the Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB) did not provide comprehensive information sector by sector on an annual basis of the projects supported by EFSI;
9. Takes note of the launch in 2016 of the Green Shipping Guarantee Programme through the new financial product CEF Debt Instrument and EFSI, which will potentially mobilise EUR 3 billion of investment in equipping vessels with clean technology; asks the Commission to provide detailed information on the implementation of this programme, including on the financial, technological aspects as well as on the environmental and economic impacts;
10. Notes that the number of financial instruments has increased considerably which allows for new blending opportunities in the transport sector, while at the same time creating a complex web of arrangements around the Union budget; is concerned that these instruments alongside the Union budget could risk undermining the level of accountability and transparency, as reporting, audit and public scrutiny are not aligned; regrets furthermore that with the use of the EFSI funds, implementation powers are delegated to the EIB with more limited public scrutiny than for other instruments supported by the Union budget;
11. Supports the Court's recommendations in particular regarding the need to find how the Union budgetary system could be reformed, in particular as how best to ensure that overall funding arrangements are not more complex than necessary to meet Union policy objectives and guarantee accountability, transparency and auditability;
12. Calls upon the Commission to clearly present for the sector of transport an assessment of the impact of EFSI on other financial instruments, in particular with regard to the CEF as well as on the coherence of the CEF Debt Instrument with other Union initiatives in good time before the proposal for the next MFF and for the next CEF; requests that this assessment presents a clear analysis on the geographical balance of investments in the transport sector; recalls, however, that the amount of money spent under a financial instrument should not be considered to be the only pertinent criteria to be used when assessing its performance; invites, therefore, the Commission to deepen its assessment of the achievements completed under Union funded transport projects and measure their added-value;
13. Reiterates its request that the Commission, in view of the multiple sources of funding,

provide an easy access to projects -in form of a one-stop-shop- in order to allow citizens to clearly follow the developments and funding of infrastructures co-financed by Union funds and by the EFSI;

14. Notes that research and innovation accounts for 59% of spending of the MFF sub-heading "Competitiveness for growth and jobs"; is concerned that the level of errors is high (4,1%); emphasises that innovation is a cornerstone to ensure sustainability of transport; calls on the Commission to put forward further simplification measures and ensure that a technical and financial support is provided so that funding is adequately used and more participants, in particular SMEs, would profit from Union funds; reiterates the need to secure enough Union funds in the form of grants in the next MFF for research and innovation;
15. Welcomes the Galileo declaration of initial service in 2016; underlines the importance of EGNOS for the transport sector; notes in this respect that at the end of 2016 there were 219 EGNOS airports where EGNOS-based landing procedures had been implemented in the Union and that in road transport the number of trucks using EGNOS for tolling was EUR 1,1 million; asks the Commission to provide in the next annual budgets the necessary financing to provide EGNOS coverage for entire EU territory;
16. Calls on the Commission to evaluate the financial effectiveness of the agreement with Eurocontrol regarding the Performance Review Body ( PRB ) and to advance the proposal to establish PRB as a European economic regulator under the supervision of the Commission; moreover, taking in account the necessity to implement as soon as possible the Single European Sky and in order to increase the competitiveness of aviation industry, calls on the Commission to advance the proposal to designate the Network Managers as a self-standing service provider set up as an industrial partnership;
17. Notes that INEA has adopted in 2016 the INEA Audit Strategy 2017-2024 and that estimates of error rates are not available yet, as the first audits on CEF will take place in 2017;
18. Welcomes the INEA ex-ante control strategy for transport adopted in 2016 taking into account best practices from the TEN-T programme as well as the specificities of the transport CEF sub-programme and driven through targeted sampling with the purpose of maintaining a low error rate; welcomes also that the ex-ante controls allow to assess at an early stage the legality and regularity of the cost claims submitted by the beneficiaries;
19. Calls on the Commission to present an assessment of the impact of the projects financed by the Member States, in the area of transport under the Danube Strategy and to make a proposal to increase the added value of the future projects in order to contribute to the completion of this important transport corridor;
20. Deeply regrets that, due to the lack of a specific budget line for tourism, there is a lack of transparency regarding the Union funds used to support actions for tourism; reiterates its request to add a budget line in future budgets of the Union dedicated to tourism;
21. Proposes that in relation to the sectors for which the Committee on Transport and

Tourism is responsible, the Parliament grants to the Commission discharge in respect of the implementation of the Union general budget for the financial year 2016.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	20.2.2018
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 37 -: 4 0: 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Daniela Aiuto, Lucy Anderson, Marie-Christine Arnautu, Georges Bach, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Deirdre Clune, Michael Cramer, Luis de Grandes Pascual, Andor Deli, Isabella De Monte, Ismail Ertug, Jacqueline Foster, Dieter-Lebrecht Koch, Miltiadis Kyrkos, Bogusław Liberadzki, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Renaud Muselier, Markus Pieper, Tomasz Piotr Por ba, Gabriele Preuß, Christine Revault d'Allonnes Bonnefoy, Dominique Riquet, Massimiliano Salini, Claudia Schmidt, Jill Seymour, Keith Taylor, Pavel Teli ka, István Ujhelyi, Wim van de Camp, Marie-Pierre Vieu, Janusz Zemke, Roberts Z le, El bieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Jakop Dalunde, Michael Detjen, Markus Ferber, Maria Grapini, Rolandas Paksas, Jozo Radoš, Evžen Tošenovský, Henna Virkkunen
<b>Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote</b>	Olle Ludvigsson

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

37	+
ALDE	Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Jozo Radoš, Dominique Riquet, Pavel Teli ka
ECR	Tomasz Piotr Por ba, Evžen Tošenovský, Roberts Z le
GUE/NGL	Marie-Pierre Vieu
PPE	Georges Bach, Deirdre Clune, Andor Deli, Markus Ferber, Dieter-Lebrecht Koch, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Renaud Muselier, Markus Pieper, Massimiliano Salini, Claudia Schmidt, Henna Virkkunen, Luis de Grandes Pascual, Wim van de Camp, El bieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska
S&D	Lucy Anderson, Isabella De Monte, Michael Detjen, Ismail Ertug, Maria Grapini, Miltiadis Kyrkos, Bogusław Liberadzki, Olle Ludvigsson, Gabriele Preuß, Christine Revault d'Allonnes Bonnefoy, István Ujhelyi, Janusz Zemke
VERTS/ALE	Michael Cramer, Jakop Dalunde, Keith Taylor

4	-
ECR	Jacqueline Foster
EFDD	Rolandas Paksas, Jill Seymour
ENF	Marie-Christine Arnautu

1	0
EFDD	Daniela Aiuto

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention